

Fermilab Employee Advisory Group Meeting

January 30, 2012

9:30 AM – 12:30 PM, One East

AGENDA TOPICS

- Management Updates and Office of Communication
- Discuss terms and recruitment of new members
- Responding to recent web requests
- Develop possible recommendations related to WDRS initiatives
- Discuss books "Tribal Leadership" and "Organizational Culture and Leadership"
- Additional conversation on next steps for reward, recognition, management, and issues for discussion in 2012

MEETING SUMMARY

1) Management Update

The 2012 budget was approved early enough to get settled for the year and Fermilab was able to get new starts in place for all its projects. The President's 2013 budget will be released in February, and is unlikely to be acted on this year. All projects are going well. The deep space telescope was delivered to Chile and being mounted. All of the major LBNE decisions are now made and we are working on getting needed support from all sources. Mu2e is back on line to work within the available budget. The two sets of voluntary and one involuntary reduction in force have us where we need to be from a labor standpoint. There are no further staffing reductions necessary under this year's budget. The lab is just as busy here as ever, and this is a good thing.

Denise Keiner is now the lab's budget director. Jim Segrest from the DOE Office of Science visited the lab last week. He had a tour of the lab and saw the full scope of facility needs at the laboratory. Mark Palmer from Cornell is now at the lab to run the MAP program. People are coming from throughout the physics community to Fermilab to ask for help and access to the resources here. For example, ITER wants to come here for some magnet testing.

The Office of Communication has added a full-time internal communication position for the first time. The posting was released Friday and the search for a qualified candidate is now underway. Also as part of the contract assurance program, the communication system now stipulates effective internal communication. These changes were brought about in large part from the discussions and recommendations of the EAG.

The report "Plan for Discovery" which discusses the future of the lab has been distributed. Another report "Beacons for Discovery" also has been published to present a global vision for the field. They are two contrasting documents, the lab plan is more

specific, while “Beacons” looks that the overall field at a higher level.

ACTION: Pier would very much like to get feedback from the EAG on these reports.

The lab has hired the documentarians who created “the Atom Smashers” to do a short documentary on the lab. It was previewed for the Citizens Advisory Board and received extremely positive feedback. It will go through another round of edits and be available in a few months.

ACTION: The EAG would also like the opportunity to preview the documentary.

The annual potluck party was very poorly attended. A lot of effort went into the event and the associated entertainment. The EAG was asked to provide some feedback regarding future such events. It was held on a Friday night in holiday season, and most people had other commitments. The fact of it being a potluck right after work is a problem, folks are not going to go home and get a dish and come back. It also started about 90 minutes after some staff would have already left. Previous ones we heard good things about. More notice might help but that was not the major issue. Summer picnics would be nice. Folks with kids are not going to take the time during the holidays. Would people like to bring their kids? If so, you would need more kid-oriented events. For those with multiple small kids, it is simply hard to commit to events in personal time. Used to have a formal sit down holiday dinner in the cafeteria, which was well attended (on Saturday night which works better). Could also do it just after the holidays in early January when things are slower. The EAG would like to see some sort of holiday celebration. Could also consider a survey to identify interest and preferences.

2) Response to Employee Comments From the EAG Website

One concern that was shared was with the recent meetings being held across the lab with different divisions to discuss the future of the lab. One scheduled last week for IT folks was rescheduled at late notice. The meeting got shifted for 300 or so folks who had planned on attending the meeting. This would have been a second meeting; the first one was well attended. Some felt that management did not respect the time of staff by this last minute cancellation. Pier responded that the meetings are set up to be able to have time with the Director, at least an hour or more to allow for a relaxed discussion. It turned out that the DOE Director of the Office of Science scheduled to come in for a day, the management really needed to attend to that and did not feel it could give the staff meeting the attention it deserved, so decided to reschedule with about a week’s notice. Pier noted that senior management may have lost some sensitivity to such changes because they are always changing schedule to meet the latest political or DOE needs.

Another submission noted that the cafeteria can be very slow, and it might be helpful to have some sort of debit card process to speed up the process. EAG members wondered whether this is really an issue. There are already different lines at peak periods. The comment will be forwarded to the appropriate people and the EAG will provide feedback to the requestor.

2) New EAG Member Recruitment

There are currently 19 EAG members and it has been decided the EAG could accommodate up to 24 members, with turnover of up to 8 slots per year. There are eight slots available this year, and 3 empty slots in future years. It will take three annual cycles to get to 24 members, however the three empty slots could be filled earlier if needed to create balance.

In creating balance, EAG members noted that Job category should be the first criteria, and then balance across division. Both are important but ensuring all job categories are included is particularly important. It is important to communicate specific job titles, as not everyone understands the job classifications. Once that balance is established, gender and diversity issues can then be used to create a final distribution. Supervisor and peer recommendations are important to the overall selection process. The March EAG meeting will include both outgoing and new members to help with the transition.

Specific needs for this year include:

- Technicians
- Engineers
- Scientists
- IT
- Higher level division as we are losing two senior physicists

Bruce Chrisman will use this input and begin the targeted recruitment process to get nominations. The target is eight new members, with possibility of three additional people to help balance the group as needed. Need to communicate the process and commitment to being on the EAG.

ACTION: The EAG also needs to evaluate the role and effectiveness of the steering committee, and the leadership structure that makes sense moving forward.

3) Recommendations on WDRS notes from September

It was decided to create a recommendation around these ideas as well as other communication-oriented ideas that have been expressed but not organized into a single recommendation.

ACTION: Eileen Berman agreed to take a first shot at putting these ideas into recommendation form. Doug Sarno will cull other meeting notes for additional internal communication ideas. Eileen will distribute to all for input.

4) Discussion on Management Books

The EAG discussed the books "Tribal Leadership" and "Organizational Culture and Leadership". Talked briefly about how to get to the "we're great" stage of organizational culture—changing language, how we talk with each other, expectations and opportunities together.

It is important to understand our culture at the lab and see what really happens here and how it affects our work and performance. There are many retiring employees and many new projects starting with new people coming to the lab. It appears to be a good

time to evaluate the culture at the lab and identify needed changes and directions that make sense as we approach the future.

Author Edgar Schien talks about the importance of relationships and trust of supervisor in line management organization--without good relationships and trust the organization will not work. Without the ability to go to their manager, employees lose confidence and are likely to get more upset. Teri Dykuis provided a handout on some of the key concepts included in the book.

Given the trusting relationship as a foundation, there are important steps to create that. One approach is "helping"—providing assistance both ways in the manager-employee relationship. In today's workforce, the manager is not also the expert. However, at the lab there are prevalent attitudes that the manager is smarter than everyone else, and this can get in the way of developing trusting relationships. We need to create a better culture of manager as an enabler of employees to get the work done, and providing the resources and support needed to get the job done.

One new manager noted that it is not so easy to get management training; someone else has to get you signed up and do all the right paperwork.

So how do we move past all this philosophy and begin to create some action-orientation to making effective change in the organization? Jamie Blowers provided some initial notes and talked about how to creating a reinforcing cycle of dialogue-helping-trust.

The EAG discussed the challenge in defining what we value and demonstrating, holding to, and preserving those values. It was noted that how we talk to each other is key, society as a whole has changed how it talks to each other, less civility, more anger, and this undermines all those issues of trust and helping.

SLAC did some work on this a few years ago and we should see if any of their results are useful at Fermilab.

The prevailing key value at the lab has always been that smart people can just figure it out and they should just be left alone to sink or swim. This approach is no longer an effective one, times have changed, and we all need more cooperation to get the work of the lab done well.

Lack of communication is still a huge problem in PPD, bringing division leaders to an EAG meeting would make sense. You need to start small. One EAG member asked their department head for monthly meetings. After initial resistance, the department did eventually start having monthly meetings and it is making a big difference.

In line with the some of the directions in the book, the lab needs to clarify some key issues around culture:

- What is our noble cause?
- What are our core-shared values?

- What are the expected behaviors?

This is work where the EAG could play a significant role and wishes to contribute. Much of the work and conversation of the EAG has included significant values-laden dialogue, and there was much of this in the earlier focus groups as well. Communication, supportiveness, civility, management effectiveness have been major themes as well as efficiency and quality. The real key is how do we both identify the values we espouse and why they are important

EAG Action Items:

- EAG members should provide feedback on the two new publications on the future of high-energy physics.
- The directorate will conduct convening process for obtaining nominations and selecting 8 to 11 new members. Will check in with steering committee during the process.
- The steering committee will evaluate the role and effectiveness of the steering committee, and the leadership structure that makes sense moving forward, and how next steering committee or future structure should be selected.
- Eileen Berman will organize communication ideas from previous meetings into recommendation form.